

Dear Jim,

12/23/73

only because you asked it did I take the time to read the 9/23/73 issue of The Forensic Science Gazette, from the Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences, Dallas (Parkland?). I didn't even look at the Lattimer piece. DiMaio's opinion and Commentary can come right from what I forecast prior to any examination of the film. But I did read and mark the Wecht/Smith offering.

I expected a very bad piece of business. I was disappointed: I found much worse.

There is virtually nothing in this that can survive critical examination. Where it is not seriously flawed it is a poor rehash of old information. For example, it falls short in treating the so-called single-bullet theory of what I was able to do before 2/64, in Whitewash. And it makes factual errors in this that could have been avoided if they understood what is in that old first-writing alone. I did tell Smith this should have been his beginning point two years ago. As with everything, he knows better--and does badly.

The factual errors and wrong factual assumptions are quite hurtful and we can expect them to be cited against us in the future.

If you are interested, one you can easily comprehend is their statement that the negatives show shots from the building and no other source, only to the west. This assumes what is not addressed: the positions of the body with relation to that building and the time of the shooting, including in time the position of the car. In its scholarship this scribbling is so deficient it doesn't even give the Commission's locating of the car at the time the Commission said the relevant shots were fired. So, how can they say? Of course, this doesn't stop them. They say anyway.

There is, in fact, persuasive evidence of a head shot from the front quite apart from the backward motion (wrongly represented as a single motion). I'm not going into these things now, but I've marked the places for the future if you are interested. That Cyril didn't see this is a remarkable self-indictment. So is the failure of both of these characters to refer to litigation over the spectro, to which they refer often and less than honestly or completely accurately.

The really terrible thing is that there is no single good word I can say for this article. There is no area in which pervasive factual and evidentiary and scientific ignorance is not flaunted, and this also is worse than I'd expected. Now is there any single area in which there is not gross factual error of the most basic nature.

There were some things I had forced before Cyril made his examination. He was so utterly incompetent he didn't even note these.

There were other things I did not have to force and those, too, he didn't see.

So, in every sense, this is an incredibly bad job, worse than I'd expected.

I have made a separate file of this under "Autopsy." I don't think it is worth the time of either of us to go over it but if you desire, I will. But I won't take the time to write it. It isn't worth it. And I have no desire to fight with either of them. I'd rather ignore both to the degree I can. When I consider that Cyril is supposed to be this great expert and Bob spent all that time preparing to help him, including annoying me to the point where I almost lopped off a thumb, it is a bit too much.

DiMaio's partisanship is obvious. We are indebted to Cyril and Bob for this being possible.

Of all the staggering things, nothing is quite as incomprehensible as Cyril's professional incompetence here displayed.

And both can't understand the written word. I don't mean mine. I mean the testimony both are supposed to have mastered. You'd understand if you'd taken the time to read Post Mortem. It even reflects the film I never saw more faithfully and completely than Cyril, who did see it. It is like trusting war to generals. Ugh!